



United States Department of Agriculture

Forest Service

Kaibab National Forest
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Public Notice

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Kaibab National Forest considers new fiber optic line; comments welcome

April 1, 2020 — The Kaibab National Forest is considering authorization of a new fiber optic line. The Grand Canyon Unified School District and the Town of Tusayan obtained grant funds for this new fiber optic cable. The purpose of the fiber optic line is to provide high speed internet service to the school at the Grand Canyon, which is needed to deliver bandwidth to students whose access to high-speed Internet lags badly behind other Arizona schools. Commnet Wireless would build the fiber system. The new line would originate at the City of Williams, cross both the Williams and Tusayan Ranger Districts, as well as private properties, before terminating at the Grand Canyon National Park.

The new fiber optic cable would be installed on the national forest by hanging 3.74 miles of aerial line on existing utility poles, with 1.24 miles of line buried along Forest Road (FR) 355. Existing routes would provide motor vehicle and equipment access. No new roads would be constructed on the national forest. The locations proposed for fiber optic cable installation occur within existing utility corridors, which is consistent with the Land and Resource Management Plan for the Kaibab National Forest through "minimizing environmental disturbance by co-locating communication" infrastructure.

Deputy District Ranger, Andy Kelher, invites public comment about the proposed fiber optic line, and is considering use of this categorical exclusion to authorize the project on the national forest: Additional construction or reconstruction of existing telephone or utility lines in a designated corridor [36 CFR 220.6 (e)(2)]. If interested, please submit your written comments by April 24, 2020, using FAX at 928-635-8208, via mail sent to 800 South 6th Street, Williams, AZ 86046, or by email at comments-southwestern-kaibab@usda.gov. A map of the project is available online at: https://data.ecosystem-management.org/nepaweb/nepa_project_exp.php?project=56401. For questions, contact Sue Farley, Environmental Coordinator: email at susan.farley@usda.gov or phone at 928-635-8331.

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